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Study on the Waistband of RedYao Women in Guangxi of China

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Abstract

RedYao is a subline of Yao with a long history. The name of RedYao originates the red costume of women. In the background of culture tourism, The costume of RedYao come into notice for uniqueness. But for waistband, the previous studies mostly focus on the color and shape and no analysis on craft. This article records the making process of waistband on the base of field work including the weaving of main part and hand knitting of the tassels. Now the waistband as a economic resource promotes the regression of costume craft for its' simplicity. As an a example of the waistband, Craft Simplification can foster interest, popularize the basic craft knowledge and enlarge the inheritor cycle which provides a new way to protect the traditional craft.

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Keywords: RedYao, waistband, making process, simplification, craft protection;

Introduction

RedYao is a subline with a long history of Yao. They call themselves ju lian or ju nuo^[1] which means Yao people. They mainly lives in Sishui and Heping village, Longsheng county, the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region in China for more than 1900 years. RedYao is famous for red costume of women which wins the good

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reputation of nation in peach forest. The costume of RedYao is decorated by wax printing, embroidery and brocade which embody the underlying connotation of Yao culture. The waistband of RedYao women is two cun(0.67 metre) wide by nine chi (three metres) long in plain weave which is decorated with tassels in both ends. It is made by simple waist loom. It is a necessity of life also a traditional Artwork.

Research method

The research objects is the waistband of RedYao including the first document evidence and papers about RedYao, the material items of common people in the daily life of RedYao women and on display of the Guangxi Museum of Nationalities. The three steps were included: first of all, related literatures about RedYao made us understand the history of the nation. Based on studies of material items, the aesthetic significance and effectiveness use of the waistband is analyzed. Secondly, based on the field work done within the Longsheng County for several times, the weaving process of waistband is reproduced. At last, the popularity of the waistband technique provides a new way to protect the traditional craft.

Results and discussion

1.1. The practical function of waistband.

In the RedYao's costume, the appearance of waistband is not only to meet the need of dressing , but also to decorate and beautify. Firstly, it meets the need of dressing. Because the women's upper outer garment of RedYao have the "left lapel". With no button and the cloth is heavy, the waistband is needed to tighten the garment. Secondly, the waistband is a decoration. It is bright red or rose red and echoes the colour of garment which provides a visions transition from the bright-coloured garment to the plain black apron. The use of waistband is drawing the outline of women's profile. When women walk the tassels wave which are full of dynamic beautify and rhythm sensation.



Fig.1. girls in weaving garment and waistband



Fig.2. woman in embroidery garment and waistband

1.2. the making process of waistband.

The author conducts much field work in 2007 and 2012. Now all the thread are bought in the market and 40 Yuan(RMB) each bundle. The waistband is plain weave and the density of warp is 70 /cm, the density of weft is 19 /cm. The making process is as follows:

Firstly, the weaving of the waistband's main part. First, Warping. The warp is surrounded two sticks about one zhang and five chi (about five metres). The red thread is 240 gen and divided for four groups. The green thread is inserted in 6 neutral positions. The regular pattern is 1,6,1,6,1. Then is white thread following the rule of 1,2,1 (Fig3). The weaver decide the colour and width of matching thread as they like. The elder prefer blue and yellow thread.

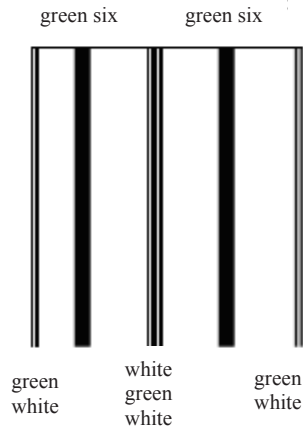


Fig.3. matching thread distribution

Secondly, healding. First, the local people wind the cotton thread in the A end of the stick in U style and reserving a length in order to take out the stick conveniently and knot with the tail end. Second, the circular warp is divided two layers. The white cotton thread passes through the ups from below and return the A end. Then they go to the B end anticlockwise to wind the downs from the blow and go back to A end clockwise. The process repeats until each warp goes through the white cotton thread. Lastly, the stick with U style is taken out. Knotting the beginning and tail end in the middle position. The knotting is the heald bar. It can lift or put down all the upper warp or lower warp. (Fig4)

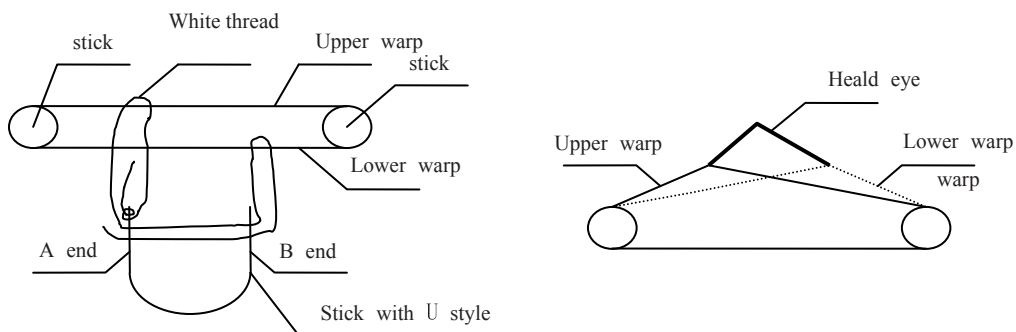


Fig.4 . healding

Thirdly, fastening and tightening warp. First, One end of the warp is tied to a stick and is fasten in the rope of the beam. The other end is tied to the roller part and is fasten in the waist of the weaver with the help of belt. Four sticks are inserted by wefting insertion in the end near the body. Little bamboo stick is winding in the other end to strain the warp. The weaver put the warp below the stick vertically and winds the upper half part anticlockwise (Fig5)



Fig.5. fixing two ends

Fourthly, weft insertion. First, the weaver lifts the B end of the heald and a fell will appear. The beating-up knife is inserted for weft insertion conveniently. Second, the weaver lifts the A end. The warp will alternate. In the practical operation, the weaver will loosen the heald and pushes down the fell under the B end. Thus the new fell is shaped under the A end for wefting easily.

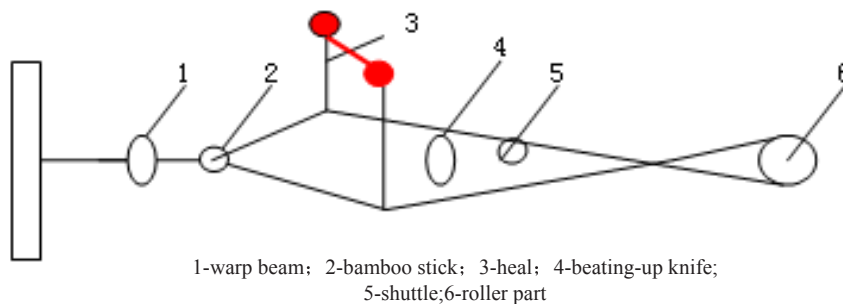


Fig.6. weaving sketch

Lastly, cutting the end. Thus weaving some lengths, the end can cut from the fixed place. The remains can be tassels. By the process, the main part of the waistband is finished.

1.3. Knitting tassels

Tassels is hand knitted. The colour is represented by the thread of surface layer or inlayer.

The method is 90°wrapping and 45°wrapping. 90°wrapping fits for three consecutive thread. The right is wrapping 90°with the left two consecutive thread. 45°wrapping fits for four thread. Two thread of same colour are in a group. Ups and downs of each group warp is alternate with other. The colourful warps in surface layer pass through the two lower thread by 45°. So both sides are the same colour.

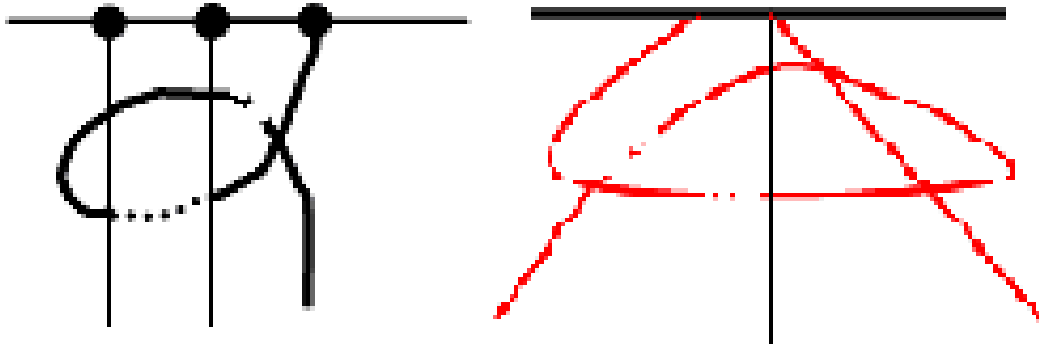


Fig.7 . (a) 90°wrapping (b) 45°wrapping

Firstly, threading. Two are black in each four thread for the colour effect. Secondly, The thread are knitted by 90°wrapping for a continuous part (Fig8). Thirdly, showing colour. This step adopts 45°wrapping. First is colourful, the floating is colorized thread. Then is black. The colourful thread is falling and the black is floating. (Fig9)

Thus repeating, the tassels of waistband is finished.

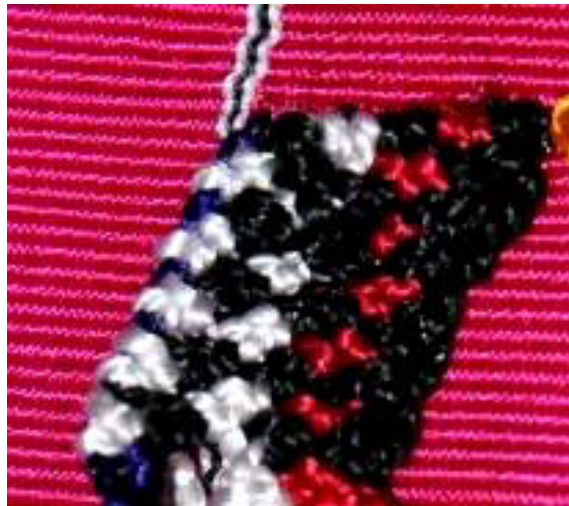


Fig.8. linking of colour thread



Fig.9. showing colour

1.4. cultural reflection of waistband making

Waistband has become economic resources as a national sign in the background of Cultural Tourism. The enthusiasm of local people for traditional craft are aroused because it can bring economic benefit and is easy to weave. We can see that Craft Simplification is a new way for craft protection.

Firstly, Craft Simplification can cultivate the interest of common people. The ordinary are fear for complex craft and will alienate it. The Craft Simplification is a precondition for mass accepting. In the scenic spot, many tourists are interested in the waistband weaving and expect to have a chance to try. Simplifying means grasping the most smarter elaborate organization on the insight of the essence^[2]. The simplifying craft is a bridge to mass.

Secondly, the basic knowledge of craft is popularized. The waistband weaving is simple but reflects the basic weaving principle. The special tassels embody the characteristic of traditional knitting. People comprehend and realize innovation on the base of understanding basic principle. The aim of popularization is give the people a chance to know the craft and value it.

Thirdly, It enlarges the inheritor cycle. Spreading simplifying craft can promote interest and popularize the basic knowledge to expand mass-base. The craft is spreaded by a wide range of individuals. The inheritor is not confined in the blood relationship. More inheritor will be found by the good mass base..

Meantime the publicity of culture can carry out by multi-path. The people have a knowledge of history and culture for better inheritance and innovation. The survival and development of traditional craft should integrate modern culture to embody the vigorous vitality.

Conclusion

Costume is a cultural icon of nation which forms the existence of stable continuity. Costume represent the cultural identity inside and outside. The charm of costume craft is that they convey the marrow of the past life experience and bring us to the world—the ordinary world including working, manufacturing and consuming of the common people by the symbolizing signs of a past era^[3]. So the better protection of craft is a goal for people.

We have a knowledge of weaving tradition by the making process of waistband. We see that minority women perform beautiful works with simple tool and easy process. In the new social context, simplifying the craft and popularizing the connotation is a new way to protect traditional craft.

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